NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

This pleasant season, bringing us as it doth the first genial taste of spring, the breath of its earliest flowers, invites the thoughts out of their prisons of the winter, calls the fancy abroad, bids us to gardens, to fields, to the country, to rural employ-ments, and the approach of rural pleasures of every sort. The shall (in our part of the world that earliest vernal messenger, more welcome too than the swallow, because it bringeth a better price in market) hath been with us several weeks, though checked in its abundance of arrival by intervening spells of cold weather.

The French have a sort of culinary adage about the shad; for that popular wisdom which maketh proverbs is particularly apt in France to make them out cooking. If it be true that the best of all de finitions of man is, not that he is " a featherless biped," nor "a laughing and crying animal," but "a cooking animal," then your Gaul must stand at the head of all human races, as the supreme specimen of the faculty which distinguisheth the human animal from all others-the faculty of cookery. This by way of parenthesis, however, like a late Presi-

dential reign.

Well, Monsieur says, in his profound way, about shad, "Jamais riche ne mangea une bonne alose, ni pauvre une mauvaise;"* for the shad that arrive first sell highest and are the worst.

Another thing we have to say about themthough not without some misgivings of having our statement received with incredulity-shad will sometimes bite at the hook. We may say that we know the fact; for one season, in a Southern river, we heard repeated instances of their being taken in that way, from friends whose veracity we could not for the Europeans by our countryman, Hamilton L. Smith, an instant doubt, and who witnessed the thing. But we never heard of the like, before nor since. The thing is an anomaly in fishing, and quite worthy to have been celebrated in the most charming of all piscatory books, of which we have before us the following very pretty and ornate edition, to a notice of which the preceding is intended to be a preface:

"The Complete Angler; or Contemplative Man's Recrea tion: being a discourse on Rivers, Fish-ponds, Fish and Fish-ing. By Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton. With notes biographical and explanatory, and the lives of the authors. London. L. A. Lewes, post 8vo.

There are few books in our language of greater merit than this, merely as a literary production. It would be difficult, indeed, to point in English to a better model of that old style for which the French have a name, (the naïf,) but we none-the style of which Amyot and Montaigne are the exemplars in that tongue and Walton in ours. It is a manner full of sweetness, of unaffected elegance and sense. heightened all in their effect by an air of half-rustical homeliness, and a diction touched with archaisms and quaintness. In Walton, the charm of all this is graced besides with an excursive, but most unrestrained fancifulness; with a spirit the most amiable and cheerful, but religious; and with a great happiness and art of spreading interest over his subject. There is a poetic love of Nature through his whole book, which must be infinitely attractive to all who preserve minds undebauched of such tastes. In a word, it is a volume which must be confessed to be one of those which every one should have read, whether votaries or not of his art.

True, the gentle craft has its depreciators; but so have all its sisters-Poesy, of which Sir Philip Sydney, that ornament of modern knighthood, was compelled to write a defence; Music, which some folks would turn out of the church; Arms, which the Peace Society would banish, no doubt that the badly strong might buffet the helpless as they liked: Learning, which Jack Cade's men thought an abomination; Medicine, long denounced in favor of old women and quacks; Wine, because some drink too much whiskey; Eloquence, because it is too per suasive; Beauty, because it takes the mind captive; and even Religion, because it has its wonders.

That behemoth of arrogance and pomposity, for instance, Dr. Johnson, who believed in ghosts and had obvious misgivings about Second Sight, did not believe in angling; which is no great wonder in a

PREMIUM FOR THE DISCOVERY OF A COMET.

HIGH SCHOOL OBSERVATORY, PHILADELPHIA, MARCH 21, 1845. Messrs. Epirons : I avail myself of your columns, in con liance with the request of Mr. State Counsellor SCHUMACHER, of Altona, to make public the conditions on which the King of Denmark awards the gold medal of twenty ducats founded by rederick VI. for the discovery of the telescopic comet. Thes onditions are stated in full in the four hundredth number of Schumacher's valuable publication, the Astronomische Na

1. The first discoverer, in any nation, of a telescopic come which, at the time of its discovery, is not visible to the naked eye, and whose orbit is unknown, will receive the comet me dal on complying with the following conditions:

2. If the discoverer resides in North America, he mu the night of the discovery of a suspected comet, address a let ter to George Benell Arry, Astronomer Royal, Greenwich Observatory, England, announcing the fact and stating the place of the comet, if possible the direction of its motion, and he geographical position of the discoverer's residence. The etter must be forwarded by the first post, or, if there is no post, by the first conveyance, packet or otherwise, to STEEN BILLE, Esq., Charge d'Affaires of Denmark at Philadelphia, with request to forward the same, duly attested, to Professor Airy 3. The discoverer must search for the comet the next of successive clear evenings, and on finding it again must also orward in the same manner a statement of its place on the night of the second observation. It is recommended to the discoverer to send a duplicate to Professor AIRY.

4. The medal is awarded one year after the discov the nomination of Professors Schumacher and Airy, or, in case of their disagreement, of Professor Gauss, of Gottingen Yours, respectfully, SEARS C. WALKER.

P. S. I enclose you an extract from Professor Schuma CHER's letter giving important information relative to the com of 51 years' period, the honor of whose discovery is shared with Esq. of Cleveland, Ohio.

ALTONA, NOVEMBER 18, 1844.

DEAR SIR: I avail myself of the opportunity given me by
Mr. Steen Bille, in sending me your letter to him, to bring
you very late but very sincere thanks for the volumes of Mr. you very late but very sincere thanks for the volumes of Mr. Downe's Almanac, sent me some years ago. The great number of letters on astronomical subjects which I have to write without any aid makes me often commit what the French call "torts epistolaires," which indeed I cannot excuse, though I may explain them. Mr. Downe's Almanac seems to me one of the best of its kind, and we have, excepting England, no-

thing which deserves to be put at its side.

The comet seen by Mr. Hamilton L. Smith, on the 10th of September, had already been discovered on the 22d of August by M. de Vico, Director of the Observatory of the Collegio Romano at Rome. It was also seen [independently discovertember. Consequently, Mr. Smith cannot this time receiv the medal; but I trust he will continue his meritorious labo in spying with diligence the comets yet to be discovered while I assure you it would afford me a sincere pleasure, whenever such a discovery first made in America should place it in my power, to transmit to Mr. Bille the medal, to be handed

over to the discoverer.

Our comet for the rest seems to be a very remarkable one It is probably the same as that observed by Tycho Brahe in 585, and likewise very probably the same as the famous come of 1770, whose orbit was altered by Jupiter's attraction. King, always zealous for promoting science, will put the gold medal for comets on the best discussion of Tycho Brahe's ori-ginal observations of the comet of 1585, and has ordered that these original observations, which exist only in manuscript, shall be printed. The term will be one year after the obs vations have appeared in print.

The best elliptic elements which we up to this moment ha

of the present comet are the following. It is impossible to re-present the observations by a parabola—

Perihelion passage, 1844, Sept. 2, 49152 mean time Berlin. Longitude of Perihelion, 342d, 29m. 44s. 9m. eq. Sept. 21. "Ascending Node, 63d, 48m. 55s. 2 Inclination, 2d. 55m. Logarithm of 1 great axis, 0.4929151. 2d. 55m. 1s. 9

Eccentricity, 0.616103.
Period of sidereal revolution, 2,004,339 days.

Motion direct.

Believe me, dear sir, very sincerely yours,

H. C. SCHUMACHER. H. C. SCHUMACI To Sears C. Walker, Esq., High School Observatory, Philadelphia. THE TRIUMPH OF ART.

A report has been presented to the Academy of Science, Paris, giving an account of an artificial arm made by a Dutch sculptor, M. VAN PETERSEN, which gives to persons deprived of their arms the power of performing for themselves actions of the Academy have seen the invention of M. Van Petersen

should—

"Be settled and formed into distinct republican States, which shall become members of the Federal Union, and have the same rights of sovereignty, freedom, and independence as the other States; that each State which shall be so formed shall contain suitable extent of territory, not less than one hundred nor nore than one hundred and fifty miles square, or as near there-o as circumstances will admit."—1 vol. Laws U. S. p. 475.

tude and certain meridians of longitude. The ordinance de-clared that from and after the sale of any part of the territory destined ultimately to contain twice or three times as many in-to its wants and condition; while the laws that we make here

the Union if they will lend their countenance to it. I am for voting in the amendment of my colleague to reduce the boundaries of Iowa, and then, if Florida is to be divided, I would bisect Iowa again. One-half of Iowa will always contain twice as much population as the whole of Florida. But I said, sir, that this policy thus early begun has not been confined to that portion of the West lying between the Ohio and the Ministry of the whole country, it so happens that, as in the other respects already pointed out, the West holds, and for a long time to come will continue to occupy, a middle ground between the two extremes. If we look at western Pennsylva-

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SPEECH OF SAMUEL, F. VINTON,

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danger is now past, or fast disappearing under the increasing strength of this conservative power. The Union is fast anchored upon it, and you cannot break it from its maorings. Massachusetts and South Carolina, the North and the South. might, for aught I know, find a dividing line that would be mutually satisfactory to them; but, sir, they can find no sue line to which the Western country can assent. Where would you draw it? Would you make the Ohio the boundary,

more than one hundred and fifty miles square, or as near thereto as sircumstances will admit."—I vol. Law U. S. p. 475.

Influenced by this resolution, the Commonwealth of Virginia
on the 20th of October, 1783, passed an act ceding to
the whole of that great division of the United States her claims to the territory beyond the Mississippi is to the
volutied States her claims to the territory beyond the Ohio river
on various trust conditions, the first of which is in these
words:

"Upon condition that the territory so ceded shall be laid out
and formed into States containing a snitable extent of territory,
miles square, or as near thereto as circumstances will admit;
and that the States so formed shall be distinct republican
the table of the States and admitted members of the Federal Union, having
the same registration of the States on the States. The four new States in that quarter. Counting Louisianna and sill
be States north of it on both sides of the Mississippi, and can
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train extent control western Pennsylvathe one of the Conntrol of the States will be put down by the hand of this great central power, im-